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REMARKS BY  
**U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH DAN MOZENA**  
**AMBULANCE BOAT HANDOVER CEREMONY**  
**BANGLADESH COAST GUARD BASE**

**CHITTAGONG**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2012**

Advocate Shamsul Haque Tuku, State Minister, Home Affairs

Director General, Bangladesh Coast Guard, Rear Admiral Kazi Sarwar Hossain

Rear Admiral Thomas Carney, United States Navy

Imagine ...

Imagine a time, imagine a time when Bangladesh is an economic powerhouse, imagine a time when Bangladesh is the next Asian tiger, a time when the Royal Bengal Tiger struts proudly and powerfully across the global economic stage, a time when Bangladesh is the world's largest exporter of ready-made garments and household textiles, a time when Bangladesh is a major contributor to and participant in the global economy.

Actually, you do not have to imagine very hard; this vision could be reality relatively soon; Bangladesh could be the next Asian Tiger in a decade or two.

There is one thing you do not need to imagine; there is one thing you already well know: Bangladesh's bursting upon the global economic stage is possible only if Bangladesh's waters are open and safe for international shipping.

... and that is where the Bangladesh Coast Guard comes in ...

... and that is why this day is so important.

Today is yet another step forward in the strong partnership between the U.S. and Bangladesh, another step forward in the growing partnership between America and the Bangladesh Coast Guard. This partnership helps Bangladesh further strengthen its capacity to provide maritime security.

The Bangladesh Coast Guard confronts a huge task in ensuring the nation's maritime security.

Bangladesh's coastline is long, about 580 kilometers and the challenges are many: piracy, terrorism, fish thieves and smuggling of arms, drugs, and people.

But the Bangladesh Coast Guard is building an ever more effective force to ensure that Bangladesh's waters remain open and safe for the shipping that is critical to this surging economy, to ensure that Bangladesh's maritime assets are secure and that the nation's people are safe.

I am proud that America is Bangladesh's partner in building this needed capacity. I am pleased that today America is transferring to the Bangladesh Coast Guard three 38 foot Metal Shark Defiant Class boats configured to serve as ambulances.

These boats are dual purpose, capable to perform both ambulance and regular patrol duties. As ambulance boats, these boats certainly enhance the Coast Guard's capacity as "first responder" to disasters, including cyclones and floods; these boats better enable the Coast Guard to evacuate patients, to provide medical support at sea, and to undertake prolonged search and rescue operations in response to distress calls.

As patrol vessels, these boats are most formidable. They are designed to perform well in both riverine environments and on the Bay of Bengal, where the seas are often heavy and rough. These boats are as fast as lightning and can run down any adversary.

These boats come as part of a package that includes spare parts and crew and officer training. Initial training has already been completed; follow-on training is scheduled for next year.

This latest delivery of American boats to the Coast Guard follows the transfer last year of five 25 foot Defender Class boats. Next year, I will be back here to deliver six additional 38 foot Defiant Class boats.

A strong and effective Bangladesh Coast Guard is in everyone's interests except, of course, those who engage in illegal activities. America and the international community gain because now Bangladesh can better safeguard its own waters, thus fostering international shipping and deterring illicit activities. The region of South Asia gains as both trade and borders are now more secure. And, of course, the people of Bangladesh gain as their country is now better positioned than ever to emerge as Asia's next Economic Tiger.

Indeed, the boats that we are transferring today are truly a win-win-win for all.

I thank the Honorable State Minister for coming from Dhaka to participate in this historic occasion, and I am so pleased that Admiral Carney was able to come from Singapore to mark this event. To my good friend the Director General of the Coast Guard, I wish every success as he and the Bangladesh Coast Guard undertake to ensure the security and prosperity of the great people of most wonderful Bangladesh.

Thank you.

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